

# THE Christian History;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival  
of Religion in *England Scotland and America.*

~~~~~  
Saturday AUGUST 27. 1743. § N<sup>o</sup>. 26.  
~~~~~

*The Remainder of Mr. RUGGLES's Attestation.*

**T**HERE still are evident *Manifestations* of the Power and Grace of GOD among us. *Religion* is more peculiarly the Subject of *private Conversation*: and *religious Assemblies* are set up, both by young & old Persons, and spent in *Prayer, singing Praises* to GOD, and *religious Conferences.*

From your humble Servant,

Middleborough, August

BENJAMIN RUGGLES.

4th. 1743.

P. S. *Rev. Sir,* Altho' some Persons from the *Disorders* and *Declensions* which have appeared in *some particular Persons* who evidenced their *Convictions* by *Outcries, &c.* have thought *this Work* not to be a *Work of GOD's special Grace* and *Proof of the Revival of Religion*; yet I must declare my Opinion otherwise, and say I am *full in it*, and *verily believe*, that it is a *very remarkable Day of GOD's Grace and plentiful Out-pouring of his HOLY SPIRIT on his People.*

Testified by me BENJAMIN RUGGLES, Pastor of the  
second Church in *Middleborough.*

---

An Account of the late *Propagation of Religion* at *Westerly* and *Charlestown* in RHODE-ISLAND COLONY, in a *Letter* from the Rev. Mr. PARK's Pastor of a Church newly gathered there;

To the Publisher of the CHRISTIAN HISTORY.

*Westerly and Charles Town, RHODE-ISLAND COLONY,*  
August 1. 1743.

Sir,

**A**CCORDING to your Desire, I here communicate to you some *general Account* of the *Lord's Visitation* of *this Place*, working Salvation in the midst of it.

C c

And

And as it was the Occasion of the *first* planting of a Church in this Place, it may serve to give Light, and set forth the Glory of the LORD, to give some general Account of GOD's providential Dealings towards us *from the Beginning of my Ministry.*

In May 1733. I was sent by the Honourable and Reverend the Commissioners for the Indian Affairs, to preach the Gospel to the INDIANS and such of the English as would attend.

At my Arrival I found a comfortable Appearance of Humanity and Courtesy among the People: But a Spirit of Profaneness and Irreligion awfully prevailing. My Judgment concerning *my self* is, That I was a moral religious Person, but extremely in the Dark *as to the Way of Salvation by CHRIST.*

I laboured in the Work of the Ministry with some Laboriousness and Faithfulness in the Discharge of my Trust: Endeavouring to reduce the People to Order, and the Practice of the Duties of Religion both *moral* and *instituted*; by proving *both*, and establishing them upon as firm a Basis as possible, both from Reason and Scripture; and pressing them to Practice by the *strongest* Motives I could. And in that Method I ministered among the People for *several Years*; but all in vain: There appeared no Impressions of Religion and Virtue upon their Minds. But the more I laboured and contracted an Acquaintance, the more I saw of their Iniquity abounding: which was very discouraging; that I could by no Means prevail upon them to be better, but that they rather grew worse.

And GOD was graciously pleased not to suffer me to overlook *my self*; but by HIS SPIRIT made Application to me, and led me into the *secret Imagery* of *my own Heart*: And there I had as hard Labour to repair the Breaches which Sin had made, as among others. And tho' I had been somewhat *indoctrinated* in Gospel-Truths, and had a Work of *Conviction* so far graciously carried on in me, that I could by no Means embrace the *Arminian Principles at large*; yet something I had secretly imagining, that there was *something in Men to begin with, and that Gospel Grace came to make perfect*: But could not get to that Pitch as to think *my self ripe for Grace*, and with any Confidence lay Claim to it; because I found my Works were no better before GOD. But it pleased GOD to come closer to me still, and bring all into a ruinous Heap; 'till GOD was graciously

graciously pleased to give me to see his *Glory in the Face of* JESUS CHRIST, and discover a new and living *Way* to the FATHER, which is JESUS CHRIST.

The *Glory* of a SOVEREIGN GOD shined bright in disposing the *Interests* of Mankind as he had done both in the first and second ADAM.

I saw then, that the *Way* to help forward the Good of Mankind, was not to go to repairing and mending, but to pull down as fast as I could, because there was no Foundation at all: and according to the Manifestation of THE SPIRIT given me to profit withal, I laboured to shew forth the total Ruin of the first Adam, and the compleat Restoration in the second. -

My Ministry then began to be more contemptible: that I was so much upon Original Sin and Election, Doctrines extremely abhor'd by the People. They could bear legal Preaching, tho' it was a *Ministration of Condemnation*: so long as they could keep any Hope in themselves, Satan and a corrupt Heart would carry Men along pretty comfortably; by flattering them either that what was pressed upon them, was not a Duty, or not to be done by them who were not fully persuaded in their own Mind, however obligatory to such as were, or that in due Time they would engage in the Practice of their Duty.

But when they came to be told, that THEY could do nothing; That all THEY did or could do signified nothing toward their eternal Salvation: But all the Concerns of their Salvation were taken wholly out of their Hands and put into the Hands of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and that THEY must come to HIM, and take that Free Grace that the Gospel of the blessed GOD sets forth in JESUS CHRIST, or be damned to all Eternity: This, tho' their imaginary Power was of no Advantage, for they would not try to exert it; yet When it was denied them, stirred up their Indignation.

But I know it was GOD's own Scheme, and must be Man's, if ever he attained to GOD or Godliness.

And therefore, tho' in much Weakness, Unbelief and Unfaithfulness, I was by the Grace of GOD enabled in a Measure to contend for the Faith, and assert the great Doctrines of Grace for some Years. And the more I continued therein, the more GOD gave me to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, the more I saw the Glory of GOD therein, and was enabled to speak with more Boldness.

Yet *Satan* and a *corrupt Heart* deceived me, and got an Advantage, and kept me from making *full* and *particular Application* to Souls, by declaring what their State, according to their Profession and Practice was : But was ready to say when it came to that, that I hoped better Things, and Things which accompanied Salvation, tho' I thus spake ; lest it should raise their Prejudices, and they should wholly shut out the Word. Such a fair Shew Satan put on.

But a good and gracious GOD, who leads his People thro' dark Paths, would not suffer me to continue thus deceived : But taught me to bring his Truth more close, and minister it for GOD, and according to his Direction, and leave the Event with him. And convinced me, that, *Truth must be brought to every Man's Conscience*, or the Soul could never be made free. And therefore I now endeavoured to come to the Conscience of every Man, and bring the Truth of GOD there. And this fretted them still more.

I had by my Acquaintance with People in some Measure recommended my self to their Affections and Esteem so far as to be accounted an *honest Man that meant well*, but wild in my Notions about Religion : that they did not wholly reject me, tho' they became apparently more estranged from me : But I was resolved, through Grace, to go on boldly in the Cause of GOD and Truth, 'till I saw what the End would be.

And it pleased GOD in his Providence to bring the Revd. Mr. Gilbert Tennent this Way, both *going* and *coming* in his Travel through NEW-ENGLAND. *Going* he preached a Sermon to a Number of the People from *Math. 11. 28.* And *coming back*, to a Number more, from *Gen. 3. 9.* which last more especially roused up the People, and filled some with great Wrath : and it raised the Prejudices of People the more against me, for concurring in the same Testimony ; but all served to keep their Consciences something more awake. Now my *Hearers* became very slack about coming to Meeting : seldom above *Ten, Twenty, or Thirty* Souls appeared at the public Assembly ; sometimes not so many : and if the Weather was so as they could have any Excuse, many Times none at all. Yet Conscience was stirring. And if these Things were true, they must be wrong they knew. And tho' they fought against the Truth, they could not overcome. And the LORD enabled me as I had Opportunity more earnestly to maintain his Truth, and give no Place to Opposers.

'Till sometime after GOD in his Providence sent the Revd. Mr. *James Davenport* over to NEW-ENGLAND. He preach'd at *Stonington* adjacent to us. I went my self, and diverse from this Place to hear him. I had heard many strange Things of him, and strange Effects of his preaching. I went to meet him some Way before he came to the *Meeting-House*: And upon their coming in solemn Procession singing an Hymn, the dread Majesty of GOD seemed to fill Heaven and Earth; and a Solemnity appeared in the Countenances of all. He preach'd a plain and awakening Sermon, from *John 5. 40.* I heard nothing extraordinary, but the wholsome Truths of the Gospel, and expected no extraordinary Effect, when to my Surprize their was a Cry all over the *Meeting-House*. I went about and inquired of one and another the Meaning of their Out-cry: And when I came to understand the inward and secret Spring thereof, viz. A deep Conviction of Sin; I could not but say, *This is the LORD's Doing and it is marvellous in our Eyes.* Several of our People were pricked to the Heart; who heard him give another additional Testimony to the Truth, and saw the wonderful Effects of it. And several attended his Ministry longer there, and returned deeply wounded.

And tho' the shining Light seemed to darken me, as to my own Experiences; yet the LORD strengthened me to plead for his Truth, the Witness of which, I had in myself. There continued a *Shaking among many dry Bones*: and such then would generally come to hear me preach.

There continued much of the working of GOD's mighty Power at STONINGTON. And many were hopefully brought out of Darkness into GOD's marvellous Light.

And several of them were moved to testify and exhort others to fly for Refuge to lay hold of the Hope set before them. Upon first hearing of this, I disapproved of it in myself, and had diverse Objections against it.

But providentially a Number of them came to hold a Meeting at a remote Part of *Westerly*: And one of my Friends who I trust had been under the saving Operations of GOD's SPIRIT informed me of his Thoughts to go and hear them, and invite them to his House and hold a Meeting there. I consented provided he found them to his liking: and proposed myself to come and hear them.

Accordingly on the 21st of *January, 1741, 2.* having had a Lecture the Night before at a remote Part of *Westerly*, a Number of



of the new born Children of GOD came to me : Here they *prayed* and gave a *Word of Exhortation* : They appeared humble, and the Power of GOD seemed to accompany them.

I went with them to the Place, where they had appointed to meet in the *Evening*. I joined with them and began with Prayer. They gave some Declaration of the *Work of GOD upon their Hearts*, in *converting* them to GOD, and *exhorted* the People to come to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. And I gave public Testimony that *this was the true Grace of GOD which they set forth*, and encouraged them to bear the Testimony of *Jesus* among the People. Many were greatly enraged at *them*, and at *me* for countenancing them : But I thought the *true Grace of GOD* must not be opposed, but encouraged where-ever GOD was bestowing it, and however he was sending it. So that none of these Things moved me. I was with them the *next Day*, likewise : The Power of GOD appeared accompanying them : and I was myself strengthened and lifted up by their Means.

Upon the 28th Day of the Month, having been to *Stonington* to visit and assist the Rev. Mr. Fish, upon a *Lecture*, I was accompanied home by a Number of Converts ; and there being a considerable Concourse of People, we went into the *Meeting-House*. We *prayed*, and several gave a *Word of Exhortation* : And there was some-what of the Power of GOD visible among the People ; some crying out under a *Sense* of their *sinful and undone Condition*.

Upon the 29th of January, 1741, 2. The Rev. Mr. Ellis of *Stonington* came and preached an awakening Sermon from *Amos 6. 1.* After which I declared publicly, that if any had a *Word of Exhortation* to say, they were desired to say on. Several Christians, gave a *Word of Exhortation*. GOD began then to work more powerfully : several were *pricked to the Heart* : Two hopefully received Light and Comfort that Day : The Way was opened to the FATHER in CHRIST JESUS. They had a *Meeting* in the *Evening* at such a Distance that I could not attend it. The wonderful Power of GOD was said to be visibly manifested : several were pricked to the Heart, crying out, *Wo is me* : and several broken Hearts were healed.

Upon the 31st. being *Lord's-Day*, some Brethren from *Stonington* returned to keep Sabbath with us. We had a *Meeting* also in the *Evening*. There was great Opposition :  
But

But GOD shew'd himself victorious; and *several* were wounded in Spirit, and *one Negro* hopefully renewed.

*February 1st. and 2d.* We had Meetings. The LORD was pretent to *kill and make alive*. And in this Time the Number *hopefully converted* was *fifteen Souls*.

I continued *frequent Lectures*, (besides Sabbath Exercises) among *English & Indians*: Had frequent Help from Ministers and Exhorters. The LORD continuing to work Salvation among us.

Before this Day of GOD's Power, there was *not* (as far as ever I learnt) *one House of Prayer in the Place*, in *two large Towns* \* containing *some Hundreds of Families*, nor any that professed the Faith of GOD's own Operation, or the true Doctrines of Grace.

Now when the LORD set up his Sanctuary in the midst of us, *those Heads of Families*, who had been the happy Subjects of his Grace, immediately set up the *Worship of GOD in their Houses*; *reading, praying and singing the Praise of GOD in Psalms, Hymns and spiritual Songs*. They were brought surprisingly to know the Doctrine of the Grace of GOD; such as before had counted it Foolishness: and their Souls were thereby quickned towards GOD.

They became earnestly engaged to come into *Covenant* with the LORD and *one another* in the *Fellowship of the Gospel*.

Accordingly upon the *29th of April, 1742.* a Number of them set a-part a *Day of Fasting and Prayer*, to implore the Direction and Blessing of GOD, in settling Gospel-Worship and Ordinances among them.

And upon the *5th of May*, they were formed into a *Church-State*, by the Assistance of a *Council of Ministers and Delegates* from *Stonington*.

And upon *August* the *13th 1742.* through much Opposition became an *organized Body*: when by the Providence of GOD, I was *ordained* to the *pastoral Office* over them. May the LORD walk in the midst of this his Golden Candlestick, and hold his Star in his right Hand, feed and lead and lift us up forever.

---

\* We suppose, that WESTERLY is lately divided into two Towns; one named *Charlestown*, and the other retaining the Name of *Westerly*, and that Mr. Parks Congregation consists of People belonging to *Bath*.

The LORD *has added daily to the Church, such we hope as shall be saved.* The Number of Professors first entering into the Bonds and Fellowship of the Gospel, was *fourteen Souls, eight Males and six Females, all English*: Since which Time have been joined to our Communion *twenty-two Persons*, besides *two* that have been recommended from other Churches. Of those added *six* are *Indians*, and *two Negroes*.

They all in some good Measure appear hopefully to *continue in the Grace of GOD, and with Purpose of Heart to cleave to the LORD*; approving themselves the true and faithful *Disciples of the LORD JESUS CHRIST*, thro' manifold Temptations *pressing forward toward the Mark, growing in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.* None have run into scandalous Living, or Hetrodoxy of Opinion, to bring any Reproach upon Christianity, (the LORD have the Praise) but have manifested, under all Temptations and Tossings of the Adversary, hopeful Tokens of Stedfastness of Heart.

The LORD in the Beginning of his Visitation, was graciously pleased to shew some Tokens for Good towards the *INDIANS*, and singled out some of them for Monuments of his free and sovereign Grace.

But the Power of GOD began to be most remarkable among the *Body of them* upon *Feb. 6. 1742, 3.* when upon the *Lord's Day*, a Number of *Christian Indians* from *Stonington* came to visit the *Indians* here: I went in the *Evening* after the publick Worship of GOD to meet them, and preach a *Lecture* to them.

The LORD gave me to plead with him that his Kingdom might be seen coming with Power among the *Indians*. The LORD I trust began to answer even in the Time of *Prayer*. After which we sung an *Hymn*. The Glory of the LORD was manifested more and more. The *Enlightened* among them had a great Sense of spiritual and eternal Things: A *SPIRIT of Prayer and Supplication* was poured out upon them; and a *SPIRIT of Conviction* upon the *Enemies of God*.

I attempted to preach from *2 Cor. 6. 2.* but was unable to continue my Discourse by Reason of the *Outcry*. I therefore gave it up: And as I had Opportunity offered a Word of Exhortation, as the Lord enabled me. I spent the *Evening* until late with them.

*(To be finished in our next.)*